

**Standard USHC-9:** The student will demonstrate an understanding of the social, economic, and political events that impacted the United States during the Cold War era.

**USHC-9.2** Summarize the origins and course of the Cold War, including the containment policy; the conflicts in Korea, Africa, and the Middle East; the Berlin Airlift and the Berlin Wall; the Bay of Pigs and Cuban missile crisis; the nuclear arms race; the effects of the “Red Scare” and McCarthyism; and the role of military alliances. (H, G, P)

**Taxonomy Level:** 2.2-B Understand /Conceptual Knowledge

**Previous/future knowledge:**

In 5<sup>th</sup> grade, students were introduced to the course of the Cold War, including differing economic and political philosophies of the USSR and the United States, the spread of Communism, McCarthyism, the Korean Conflict, the Berlin Wall, the space race, the Cuban missile crisis, and the Vietnam War (5-5.4). They studied the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the United Nations, and the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) (5-5.5) and compared the position of the United States on the world stage following World War I, World War II, and the collapse of the communist states (5-6.6).

In 7<sup>th</sup> grade, students summarized the political and economic transformation of Western and Eastern Europe after World War II, including the significance of the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the United Nations, the Warsaw Pact, and the European Economic Community (EEC) (7-6.1) and the events of the Cold War, including the Soviet domination of Eastern Europe; the rise of the Communism in China; the Berlin Wall; Vietnam and Korea; the Cuban missile crisis; the revolutionary movements in Africa; the development of new military, nuclear, and space technology; and the threat of nuclear annihilation (7-6.2).

In 8<sup>th</sup> grade, students explained the economic impact of World War I and the Cold War on South Carolina, including military bases, new industries, new citizens, and the expansion of port facilities (8-7.5).

In Global Studies, students summarized the ideologies and global effects of communism and democracy, including the effects of totalitarianism and communism in China, Eastern Europe and Soviet Union (GS-6.1). They summarized the worldwide effects of the Cold War, including the competition for power between the United States and the Soviet Union, the changing relationships between the Soviet Union and China, the response by popular culture, and the collapse of the communist states (GS-6.2). Students compared the challenges and successes of the movements toward independence and democratic reform following World War II, including the role of political ideology, religion, and ethnicity in shaping governments and the course of independence and democratic movements in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. (GS-6.3).

In 12<sup>th</sup> grade American Government, students will learn how foreign policy is formulated and carried out, the impact of foreign policy on individual citizens; (USG-4.1) and an understanding of the roles of international organizations in world affairs, including the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (USG-4.2). The study of the Cold War will lay a firm foundation for this study of United States foreign policy.

In Economics, students will be required to compare the significant characteristics of a market economy with those of traditional and command economies, including differences in the roles of the government, individual firms, and households in decision making; types of economic institutions; the extent of consumer sovereignty/choice; and the role of private property rights, competition, and the profit motive

(ECON-5.1). Understanding the ideological differences between the United States and the Soviet Union is important to understanding the economic differences of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.

**It is essential for students to know:**

The **origins** of the Cold War lay in the mutual suspicions of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. that grew out of their basic ideological, economic and political differences and from their differences over the strategies of World War II. Although the US and USSR were allies against Germany, they had different strategic priorities. The Soviets suspected that the US and Great Britain were allowing the USSR to take the brunt of casualties on the eastern front in order to weaken their country and therefore demanded the immediate opening of a second front. Not until 1944 did allied forces land at Normandy in France for a direct assault on German forces on the western front. Events in the Pacific theater also set the stage for later Cold War confrontation. Fearing a heavy loss of life if the US was forced to invade the Japanese home islands, the United States wanted the aid of the Soviet army in defeating the Japanese consequently Soviet forces moved into Korea and occupied the peninsula to about the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel. However, the US dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the Japanese surrendered. Although the Soviets withdrew from Korea, they left in place a communist government. As a result, at the end of the war Korea was divided, as were Germany and Berlin (USHC 8.3).

Allied postwar goals also put the US and the USSR at odds. The USSR wanted to create a buffer zone of friendly states on its eastern border so that Germany could not invade it again. The US wanted the states of Eastern Europe to be able to hold free and fair elections. The British attempted to prop up an autocratic government in Greece, but communist rebel forces that had fought the Germans turned on this government with support from the USSR. Unable to sustain this military support, the British asked the US to take up the effort. The French attempted to restore their control of Southeast Asia. They met with resistance from the nationalist forces that had fought the Japanese under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh, however, and also sought help from the United States.

Since the indicator includes the **course** of the Cold War, it is important to take a chronological approach so that students can understand the changing nature of these tensions. By 1946, the US-USSR tensions were publicly recognized. Winston Churchill said an 'Iron Curtain' had descended upon Europe. The United States began to formulate a policy of "**containment**" initially carried out by the Truman Doctrine. The US offered military and financial aid to Greece and Turkey to resist the communist backed rebel forces. Fearing that a war-torn and economically weak Western Europe would elect socialist/communist governments, the US offered aid, the **Marshall Plan**, to promote economic rebuilding, but did not offer aid to the equally devastated Soviet Union, thus raising the suspicions of the USSR. Furthermore, the US used the threat of the atomic bomb in diplomatic talks with the USSR. Additionally, the United States supplied financial aid to the French in Indochina. The first Soviet test of the US policy, then, was the Berlin blockade. The US responded with the **Berlin Airlift** and the US won this first Cold War confrontation.

In 1949, a series of events escalated the tension between the United States and the Soviet Union. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) established a **military alliance** aimed at the USSR. The test explosion of an atomic bomb by the USSR led the US to accelerate the development of the hydrogen bomb and began a **nuclear arms race** and then a space race. After a long civil war, China, under the leadership of the American-backed nationalist Chiang Kai-shek, fell to the communist forces led by Mao Tse-tung (Mao Zedong). The nationalists fled to Taiwan (Formosa). China became two countries.

In 1950, North Korea invaded South Korea. Truman believed that the invasion was orchestrated by the USSR, but there is strong evidence that this decision was based on North Korean politics. At the urging of the Truman administration, the United Nations voted unanimously to demand a cease fire. (The Soviet Union did not veto this decision because it was boycotting the meetings of the Security Council.)

Although the UN supported a ‘police action’ to defend South Korea, the majority of troops and financial support for the **Korean War** came from the US. When US forces approached the Chinese border, the Communist Chinese attacked and drove US forces back to the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel. American public opinion turned against the war. Formal peace negotiations ended with North Korean forces contained above the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel, a victory for containment at a cost of 34,000 American lives.

These threats, both real and imagined, set the stage for a **Red Scare** that developed in the U.S. in the late 1940s and early 1950s as a result of both real and imagined threats. The tough, simplistic talk of the Truman administration caused the public to see the tension of the US and the Soviet Union as good against evil. The anxiety caused by the fall of China, the Soviet acquisition of the bomb and the Korean War made Americans look for an enemy within because surely the Soviets could not have managed all of this without the help of American traitors. Although there were some spies who aided the Soviets, the FBI uncovered none under Truman’s Federal Loyalty Program. However, countless public servants had their reputations smeared and the program laid the grounds for further false accusations. Partisan politics caused Republicans, who had not held the presidency since 1933, to accuse the Democrats of being “soft on communism.” Republican Senator Joseph McCarthy gave his name to the anticommunist crusade, **McCarthyism**. McCarthy used the tactic of the *Big Lie*, repeating an untrue accusation of affiliation with communism loudly and often, to smear countless diplomats, artists and statesmen. His “witch hunt” finally ended when the televised Army-McCarthy hearings showed the public what a bully McCarthy was and the public rejected him and his tactics.

In 1955, the Soviet Union organized the Warsaw Pact, a **military alliance** of Eastern European nations and the USSR for defense against NATO. In 1957, the space race took off when the Soviet Union launched *Sputnik*. The United States Congress passed the National Defense Education Act to promote science and math skills and to counteract the fear that consumerism had made Americans less competitive (USHC 9.1).

In 1959, Fidel Castro overthrew the American-backed dictator in Cuba and soon accepted Soviet aid. Cuban exiles trained by the CIA invaded Cuba at the **Bay of Pigs** in 1961 hoping to initiate a popular uprising against Castro. The plan failed and US prestige suffered. In 1961 the Soviet Premier ordered the building of a wall to separate East and West Berlin and keep East Berliners from fleeing to the west. The **Berlin Wall** became a symbol of the Cold War. In the fall of 1963, American spy planes photographed missile sites being built in Cuba. President Kennedy placed a naval blockade around Cuba to prevent the Soviets from arming these sites. After 13 days of tension, an agreement was reached that ended the **Cuban Missile crisis** and averted nuclear confrontation.

The rivalry between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. was also played out in Third World countries in **Africa** and the **Middle East**. The process of decolonization began after World War I and accelerated at the end of World War II. A source of important raw materials, Third World countries attracted American investments and became markets for American products. The United States had extensive interests in Middle Eastern oil. New nations in Africa and the Middle East became members of the General Assembly of the United Nations. The U.S. and U.S.S.R. tried to influence these new states with loans and technical assistance to gain their support on votes in the UN. Third World countries played one interest against the other to get the most assistance possible for their nations. Race relations in the United States influenced and were influenced by relations with Third World countries (USHC 9.6). American foreign policy, aided by the actions of the Central Intelligence Agency, often supported unpopular and undemocratic governments because they were our Cold War allies and they protected American business interests in their nations. At first, the US supported the apartheid government in South Africa and the white-minority government in Rhodesia. The CIA helped the Shah of Iran overthrow a rival who had attempted to nationalize foreign oil interests and supported the Shah’s unpopular and repressive

government. The CIA played an active role in the civil war in Angola against the Soviet-Cuban-backed faction in the early 1970s.

In the **Middle East**, Arab nationalists challenged American interests. Egypt nationalized the Suez Canal. Britain, France and Israel invaded Suez to take back the canal provoking the Suez Crisis. President Eisenhower ended the crisis by persuading France, Britain and Israel to withdraw. The Eisenhower Doctrine stated that the US would not tolerate Soviet intervention in the Middle East and that the US would intervene if any country was threatened by a communist takeover. This extended the **containment** policy to the Middle East.

United States' policy on Israel also influenced conditions in the Middle East. The U.S. recognized the nation of Israel in 1948 and supported Israel with military and financial aid in part as a response to the horrors of the Holocaust (USHC 8.4). Palestinians were expelled from their homeland when Israel was created and formed the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) to rectify this situation. In the Six Day War of 1967, Israel defended itself against attack by Egypt and Syria who were supplied by the USSR. Israel drove back the attacking forces and took over land from Egypt and Syria, creating the problem of the "occupied territories." After another war in 1973, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) embargoed oil shipments to the U.S., contributing to an energy crisis. American diplomatic efforts resulted in an end of the embargo, but not an end to hostilities. President Carter's Camp David Accords brought momentary peace to the Middle East. The Iran hostage crisis further deteriorated relations between the US and Iran. The problems in the Middle East will be further addressed in USHC 10.1.

Students should understand that the Cold War ended as a result of changes within the Soviet Union as well as because of the strain of the arms race on the Soviet economy (GS 6.2). The 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall, the most important symbol of the Cold War, marked its end.

**It is not essential for students to know:**

It is not essential for students to know about the agreements made between the allies at wartime conferences in Casablanca, Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam, nor about their specific disagreements over free elections in Poland. They need not know the historian's theory that the US dropped the atomic bomb as the first shot of the Cold War.

They do not need to know the details of events that escalated the tensions between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. in the immediate postwar period such as the Baruch proposal for the international control of atomic technology and materials. They do not need to know of the Soviet demand that they be able to take industrial equipment from defeated Germany in order to rebuild nor that the U.S. rejected the Soviet demands. Instead, the U.S. remembered that the punitive Versailles Treaty that ended World War I helped to create the climate for the rise of Hitler and the U.S. wanted an economically strong and democratic Germany as a counterbalance to the Soviet Union in Europe.

Students do not need to know the details of the development of the policy of containment such as that it was authored by George F. Kennan nor that the threats, backed by atomic capability and the harsh rhetoric used by Harry Truman to "sell" the expenses of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, exacerbated the tensions between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. Although students should understand that the Marshall Plan aided European recovery and laid the foundation for a strong European economy, they do not need to understand that the Marshall Plan began the process toward economic internationalism in Europe that gave rise to the Common Market and the European Union.

Students do not to understand the partisan political reasons for the escalation of the Cold War, such as the China Lobby's accusation that the Truman administration "lost" China despite the evidence of rampant

corruption and lack of popular support for the Nationalist Chinese. Students do not need to know about the conflict between Republican-backed General MacArthur and President Truman nor the impact of the Korean War on the election of 1952.

Students do not need to know the details of Cold War espionage, such as the stories of the Rosenbergs, Alger Hiss, Whitaker Chambers, Nixon and the microfilm in the pumpkin, nor that the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) investigated Hollywood. Although students should understand the role of propaganda during the Cold War and the importance in popular media of Cold War themes, they need not know that in order to prove their loyalty some filmmakers made strongly anticommunist films that confirmed to the American public the existence of a threat. The US Information Agency used propaganda in the Third World to promote capitalism.

Students do not need to remember all of the details of the Bay of Pigs or the Cuban Missile Crisis. Students need not know the details of the Cold War in Africa and the Middle East. For instance, they need not know the names of leaders in these regions. Although it is important for students to understand that Cold War events led to resentment in the Third World and to problems that we still face today, they need not remember specific incidents which reflect this resentment such as the “Black Hawk Down” incident in Somalia in the 1990s.

**Assessment guidelines:**

Appropriate assessments will require students to **summarize** the origins and course of the Cold War conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union. Students should be able to **explain** the causes and effects of various incidents in the Cold War, identify **examples** of, and **classify** those incidents, **compare** them to one another, **interpret** the significance of each incident and **infer** their impact on relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. Students should be able to **interpret** maps, graphs, photographs, political cartoons and propaganda and **infer** their relationship to information about the time period.